

**TESTIMONY OF THE  
DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE  
BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON INLAND  
FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE**

**NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST L.D. 1117**

**An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Muzzle-loading Hunting  
Season**

**PRESENTED BY: Representative CROCKETT of Bethel (By Request)**

**DATE OF HEARING: April 11, 2013**

Good afternoon Senator Dutremble, Representative Shaw and members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee. I am Jim Connolly, Wildlife Division Director at the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, speaking **NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST L.D. 1117**.

L.D. 1117 would modify existing law and move the muzzle-loading season from following the firearms season for deer to preceding it.

From a biological standpoint this change does not increase bag limits for any of the current deer seasons. However from a social perspective this does impact other seasons that currently occur during this period. This change would place the muzzleloader season during the October archery season, part of the bear hunting season and part of the bird hunting season. Given the fact this is a muzzle-loading only hunting season, in 2013 it would open on October 12 and close October 25 prior to the youth day for deer hunting. The structure and timing of the current seasons are a balance of competing interests. While this change may make muzzle-loading hunters happy we believe this will not be well received by other hunters. We also anticipate that the change in timing will create additional interest in the sport of hunting with a muzzle-loader.

I would be glad to answer any questions at this time or during the work session.